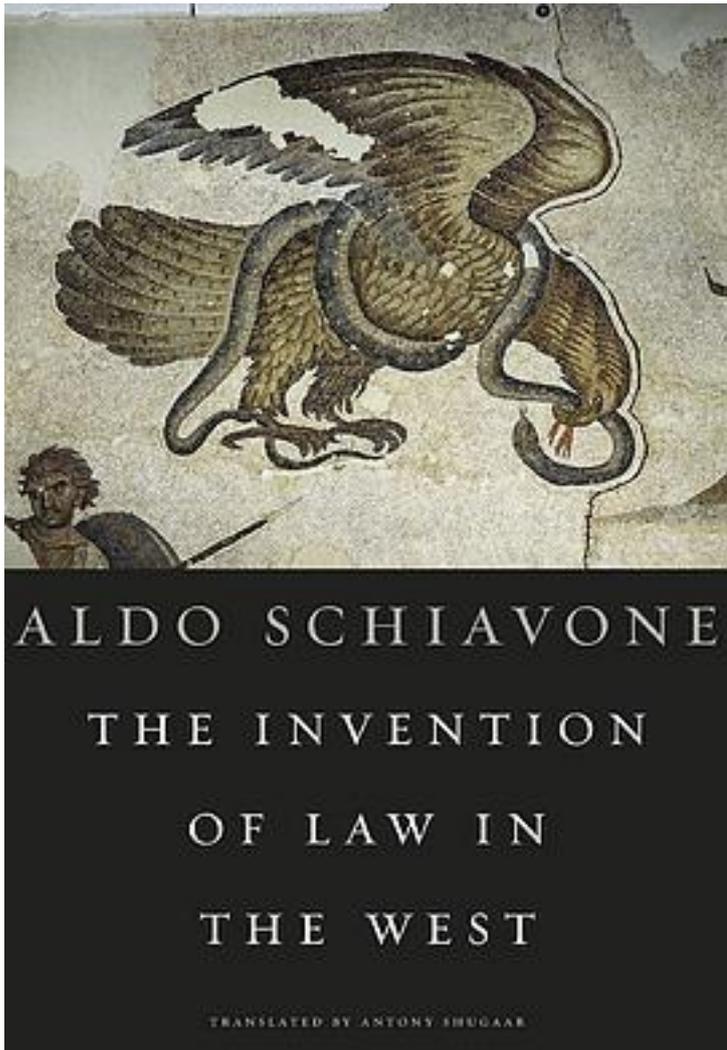


# The Invention of Law in the West



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Law is a specific form of social regulation that is distinct from religion, ethics, and even politics, and is endowed with a strong and autonomous rationality. The invention of law, a crucial aspect of Western history, took place in ancient Rome. Aldo Schiavone, a world-renowned classicist, reconstructs this process with clear-eyed passion, following its track and structure over the centuries, setting out from the earliest origins and moving up to the threshold of Late Antiquity. The consolidation of the Roman Empire reinforced this foundational movement. The Empire, after all, was marked by an unprecedented accumulation of power capable of creating the conditions for transforming an archaic predisposition to ritual into an unrivaled science and technology for the control of human relations.

Schiavone offers us a closely reasoned interpretative essay, set against the vast backdrop of a thousand years of Roman history. He returns us to the primal origins of Western juridical machinery and the discourse that was constructed around it—formalism, the pretense of neutrality, the relationship with political power. This is a landmark work of scholarship whose influence will be felt by classicists, historians, and legal scholars for years to come.

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